

The Office Action points out that the '562 patent in column 2, lines 12-34, discloses a compound X-M-X and refers to same as difunctional. Agreed. However, the purpose of the difunctional compound in '562, is to form a bridging group segment between POSS compounds or cage molecules, to obtain a linear copolymer, per column 2, lines 12 -- 34, where "bridging group segments" is mentioned several times. That is, the bridging group segments are external to and between POSS compounds, e.g., to tie POSS cage molecules together in a linear manner as indicated in the repeating segment of Formula 4 in column 5 of the '562 patent.

In the present application, per claims 20, 21 & 25, rings are completed in the POSS cage molecules as shown, e.g., in the reactions that form the compounds of formula 17, 18 & 5, per claims 22, 23 and 24 herein. That is, applicants, per claim 20, employ a different method to obtain a different result than does the '562 patent, i.e., to obtain one or more expanded rings in the POSS cage molecule.

As indicated above, the '562 reference does not change the POSS ring structure in the cage molecules but externally bridges or ties POSS molecules together.

Claim 20 expresses novelty in a) referencing the Y_2SiRR reagent and b) in reciting the obtaining of at least one expanded ring in the POSS molecule, which is not suggested by the '562 patent, which again, adds external bridge segments between the rings of POSS compounds.

Support for the above novel method and product is provided in the accompanying Declaration under 37 CFR 1.132, wherein Dr. Lichtenhan, a patentee in '562, states in his paragraph 4:

"Thus the method of the invention serves to expand the internal ring structure of POSS compounds, rather than to externally bridge POSS compounds together in a linear polymer structure, a significantly different process with a distinctly different product than that disclosed in the prior art patent '562. Thus, the novel expanded ring products recited in claim 25 cannot be produced by the '562 method inherently or otherwise."

Accordingly, it is believed that the method of claim 20 is novel over (and not suggested by) the applied art as are the resulting expanded POSS ring compounds recited in claim 25.

It is noted that claims 1-18 are indicated allowed and that claims 22-24 & 26-29 are objected-to but would be allowable if they depended from allowable base claims, e.g., claims 20 and 25. In view of the above discussion, it is believed that claims 20 and 25 are novel over the cited art and impart allowability to those dependent claims.

Thus applicants' claims of record, as discussed above, are believed distinguished from the prior art and in condition for allowance.

In accordance with Section 714.01 of the M.P.E.P., the following information is presented in the event that a call may be deemed desirable by the Examiner: Thomas C. Stover (781) 377-3779.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Stover', written in a cursive style.

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